
LESSON THREE

Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo: The Geography of Exploration and Conquest

OBJECTIVES:

- ❖ To place Cabrillo's life in the context of the "Age of Exploration"
- ❖ To understand geographical understanding of Cabrillo's time using maps and travel narratives
- ❖ Use primary source evidence to locate places where Cabrillo participated in conquests and settlements

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Teacher Background

Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo lived towards the end of what historians call “The Age of Exploration.” This lesson will help you give students some background about the exploration that took place and geographical understanding during Cabrillo’s time.

Activity One: Exploration

Part One: Reviewing Exploration?

- A. Have students review their definitions of “explore” from Lesson Two.
- B. Write “discover” next to “explore” on the board. Define “discover?” Other than finding a new place, what are some other types of discoveries? Possible answers: *You can discover:*
 - *something about the past (through artifacts, documents, photos, old journals, etc.)*
 - *something in the microscopic world*
 - *something about or in space*
 - *a scientific fact, such as a cure for a disease*
- C. Ask: “If you were exploring a new land, what might you be looking for?”
- D. Writing: Something unexplored is sometimes referred to as a new frontier. What do you want to explore? What do you hope to discover?
- E. *Exploration motives.* Continue your review of explorers/conquistadors by asking students to review the reasons that explorers crossed the oceans to find and conquer new lands. Reasons the students may offer from prior knowledge: Explorers sought to seek land (for themselves or the king), riches, spices, adventure, trade opportunities, native people to convert to Catholicism. Do not supply answers. Rather, leave the list posted in the room and remind students to make suggestions throughout the unit as they find other reasons.

Part Two: Early Explorers

Prior knowledge: Have students look at a present-day map or globe. Remind them that we are studying the “Age of European Exploration.” Have them locate Europe and their own location.

- A. Have students cut out the slips of paper with explorer’s names in **Handout 3-A-1** and place them on an outline map of the Americas (**Handout 3-A-2**) according to what the explorer is given credit for “discovering.” Tell students that some explorers reached only one “New World” destination while others reached more than one. Have students start by placing names they have already studied in class and then have them research the others as time permits. If time is short, you can provide them with destinations for the names they have not studied as per the list on page 83.

Extension Activities:

An additional outline map of the “Old World” is provided which could be put side-by-side with the destination map so students can draw in the routes the explorers took on their voyages. If you have the supplies to create a larger outline map, the activity can be done as a class or in groups.

To enhance students’ understanding of chronology, have them create index cards with the explorers’ names and create a timeline. This can be a group activity with the cards placed in sequence around the room.

- B. After students have filled out their outline map, say “It is 1541—what is still left to explore in the Americas?”
- C. Show students the map **Document 3-B**, “The People in the Americas before Columbus.” Discuss whether the explorers were “discovering” the New World or not. Be sure to discuss both points of view—to them, it was a new land, but to the natives it had long been discovered.

Activity Two: Early Maps***Part One: Mapping from a Travel Narrative***

- A. Introduce the idea of maps based on travel narratives by having students write a story detailing either their journey to school, how they get from their classroom to the cafeteria, or another similar trip that might better fit your class. They should describe as many details as they can from beginning to the end of their trip. Tell them to include such details as descriptions of distances, what they see on the way, and left or right turns. If desired you can tell them about the project the day before, instruct them to try out the journey, and then use class writing time the following day to write the travel narratives.
- B. Have students exchange travel narratives. Using the details from their partner’s narrative, each student should draw a map based on the descriptions. When they are finished, post the finished maps around the room and give students time to look at other maps. Discuss the process:
 1. What was difficult about drawing a map just from the description?
 2. Did anyone recognize some of the details in the narrative they used? If so, did that help?
 3. Did they look at the map that was based on their own travel narrative? How accurate was it?

Teacher Guide to Explorers

Explorer	Destination(s) (contemporary names)
Christopher Columbus	First voyage: Bahamas archipelago; Cuba; Hispanola; Haiti Second voyage: Lesser and Greater Antilles; Puerto Rico; Dominican Republic; Jamaica Third voyage: Hispaniola (again) Fourth voyage: Haiti; Jamaica; islands off the coast of Honduras; the east coasts of Honduras; Nicaragua, and Costa Rica; east coast of Panama
Juan Dias de Solis	Brazil; Uruguay; Argentina
Pedro Álvares Cabral	Brazil
Amerigo Vespucci	Coast of South America
Rodrigo de Bastidas and Juan de la Cosa	Panama
Vasco Nuñez de Balboa	West coast of Panama; the Pacific Ocean
Francisco Hernandez de Cordoba	Yucatan; Nicaragua; and Granada
Juan de Grijalva	Mexico
Hernando (Hernán) Cortés	Cuba; Mexico; Honduras
Pedro de Alvarado	Guatemala and El Salvador
Francisco Montejo	Yucatan
Pánfilo de Narváez	Cuba
Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca	Texas; Arizona; and New Mexico
Francisco Pizarro	Peru
Sebastian de Benalcazar	Ecuador
Pedro de Mendoza	Paraguay
Francisco de Orellana	Amazon River
Francisco Vásquez de Coronado	(from Mexico): Arizona; New Mexico; northern Texas; western Oklahoma; Kansas

Part Two: Examining Early Maps

- A. Show students **Document 3-C**, the *Planisphere Cantino*. This is the earliest surviving map that shows Portuguese “discoveries” in the New World. Have students refer back to their explorers’ timeline and maps and note what explorers had already reported back to Portugal. Have them note that the mapmaker might have had access to knowledge from Columbus and Cabral travel narratives.

Background

The most important manuscript map surviving from the early “Age of Discovery,” the *Cantino World Map* is named for Alberto Cantino, an Italian diplomatic agent in Lisbon who obtained it in 1502 for the Duke of Ferrara. The author of the map is unknown, but it was drawn in Portugal. It incorporates extensive new geographical information based on four series of voyages: Columbus to the Caribbean, Pedro Álvarez Cabral to Brazil, Vasco de Gama followed by Cabral to eastern Africa and India, and the brothers Corte-Real to Greenland and Newfoundland. Except for Columbus, all had sailed under the Portuguese flag.

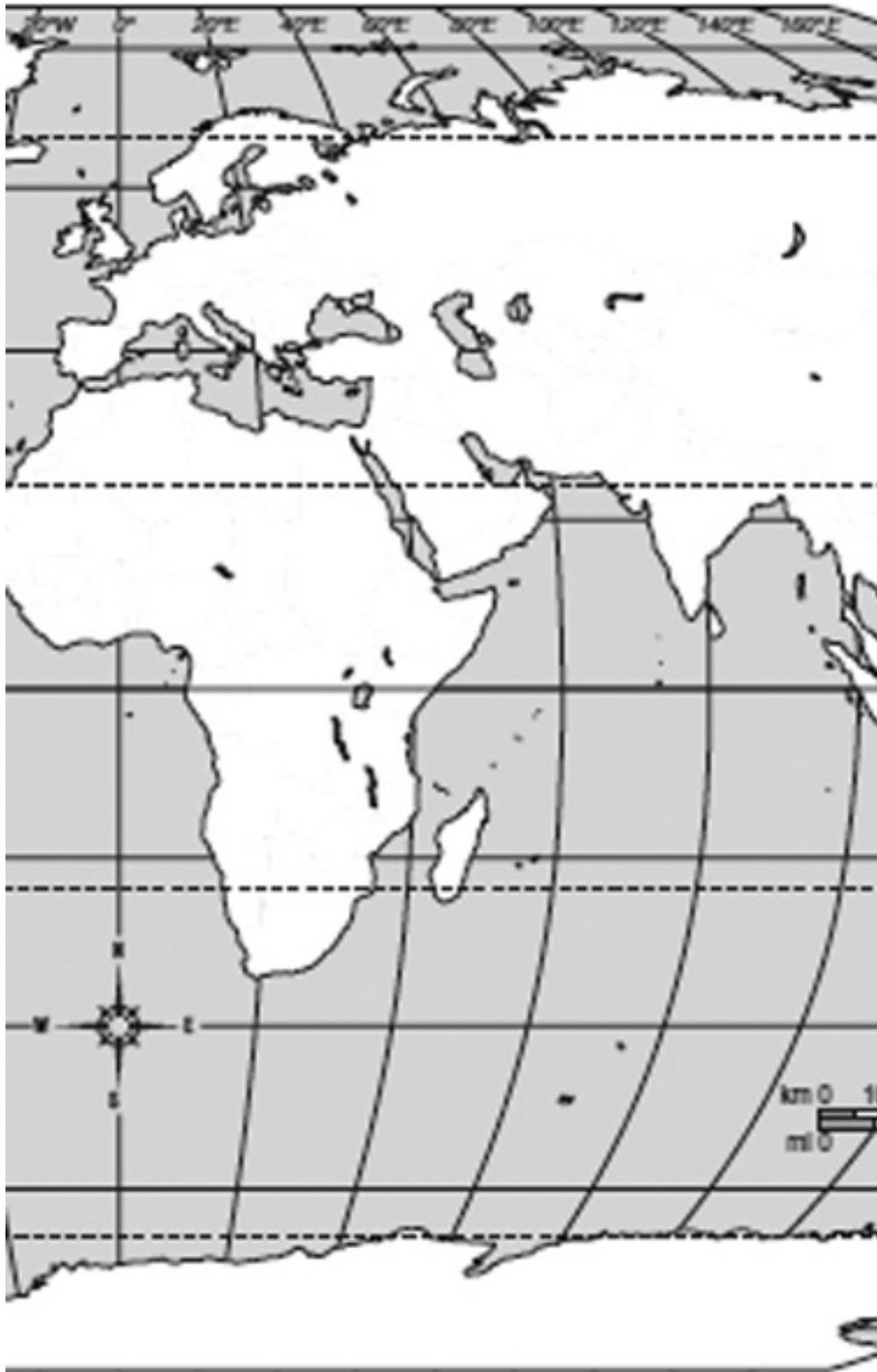
- B. Discussion questions:
- Locate Brazil and the Caribbean islands on the *Planisphere* map and compare to the present-day map of Brazil and the Caribbean.
 - What is the same about the *Planisphere* and present-day maps? Different?
 - What would cause them to be different?
 - What other features does the map include? [*Help students note the decorative items and labels.*] What purpose might these serve?
 - How did their experience with their own “travel narrative” maps help them understand the difficulties early mapmakers might have had?
- C. Assign one of each of the following maps in **Document Set 3-D** to small groups. Each group should complete the “Map Worksheet” for their map then prepare a short class presentation about the map and its features based on their answers. Explain to students that maps had different purposes. Some were practical—strictly made for navigation—while others were more decorative and meant to be valued for their artistic qualities in addition to the geographic information. Maps were also a means of attracting finances. If the area could be made interesting enough, then men might want to invest in further travels.

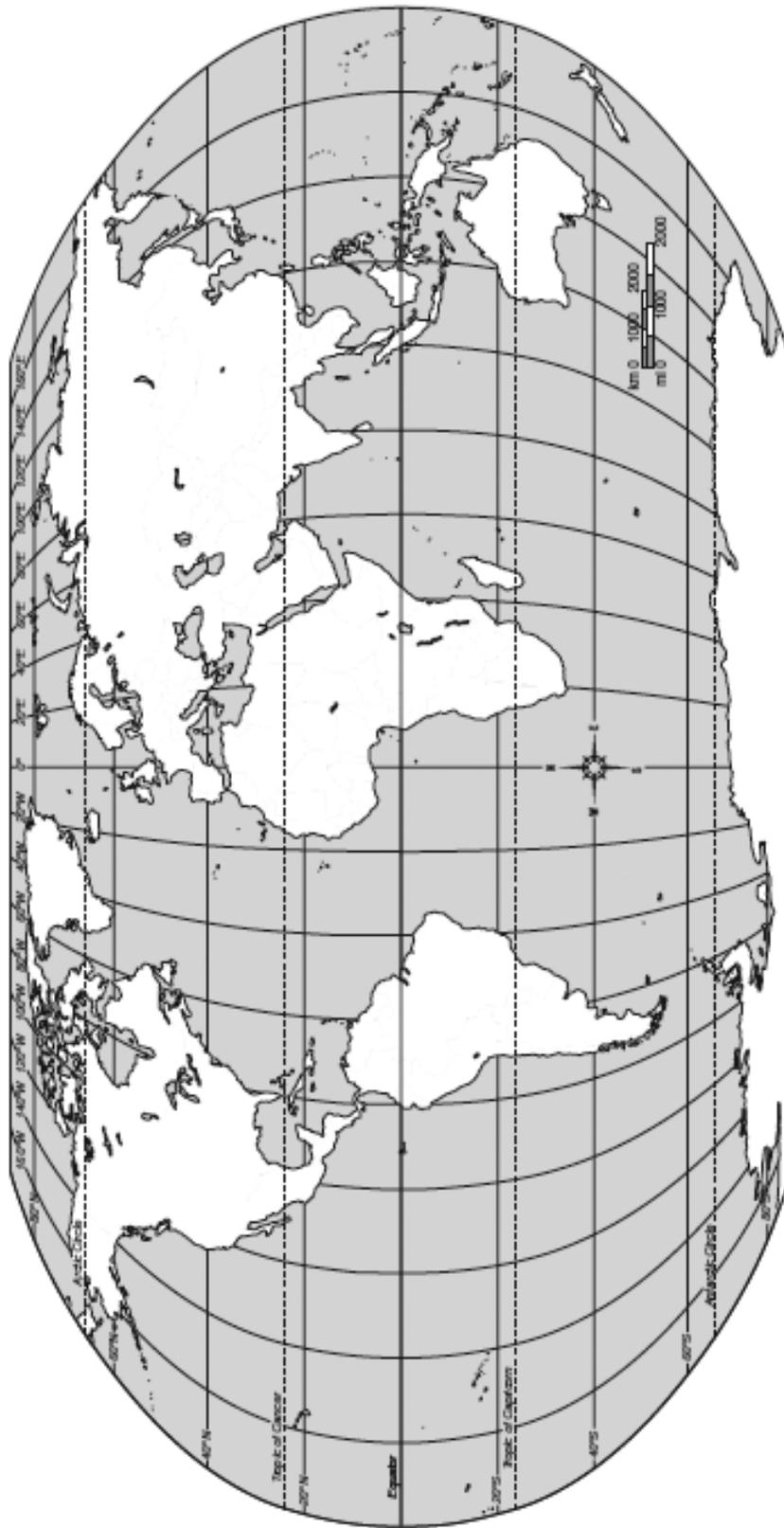
Additional Discussion Questions:

- Map One:** *Cosmographiae Introductio* (Martin Waldseemüller, 1507)
1. Who is featured on the right side of the map? Why would Martin Waldseemüller honor this person?
 2. This map was drawn over 500 years ago. What similarities and differences do you see between it and maps we use today?
 3. If you were an explorer looking at this map in 1507, would you think it would be easier to get to Asia by sailing above the American continent, or below it?
- Map Two:** Map prepared in connection with the Hernán Cortés exploration of present-day Baja California (1535)
1. This map was drawn based on an actual voyage. How does it compare to the travel narrative maps you and your class made?
 2. Do you think someone could use this map to find their way to the tip of Baja California?
- Map Three:** Map published as part of *Discourse of a Discoverie for a New Passage to Cataia* (*Debate about a Discovery for a New Way to China*) Humphrey Gilbert, 1576)
1. According to the caption, where is the mapmaker from? How do you think that influences how he drew the map?
 2. According to the caption, the mapmaker believed that he could sail from England, go above the North American continent, and then reach China. How does his belief influence how he drew his map?
- Map Four:** *America Sive Novi Orbis* (Abraham Ortelius, 1570)
1. How do you think that Ortelius' approach to mapmaking show in the way he drew this map?
 2. Review the map showing explorers' destinations from Activity One, Part Two. Do you think this 1570 map reflects information from most of those voyages?
- Map Five:** *Chart of North-West America* (Joan Martines, 1578)
1. What is the most prominent feature on this map?
 2. Is this feature a real place? Why might the mapmaker include this on his map?
- Map Six:** *Untitled* (California as an island in a printed map of America) (John Overton, London, 1668)
1. According to the caption, Overton relied on the work of other mapmakers to create and publish his maps. How do you think that influenced how he drew his maps?

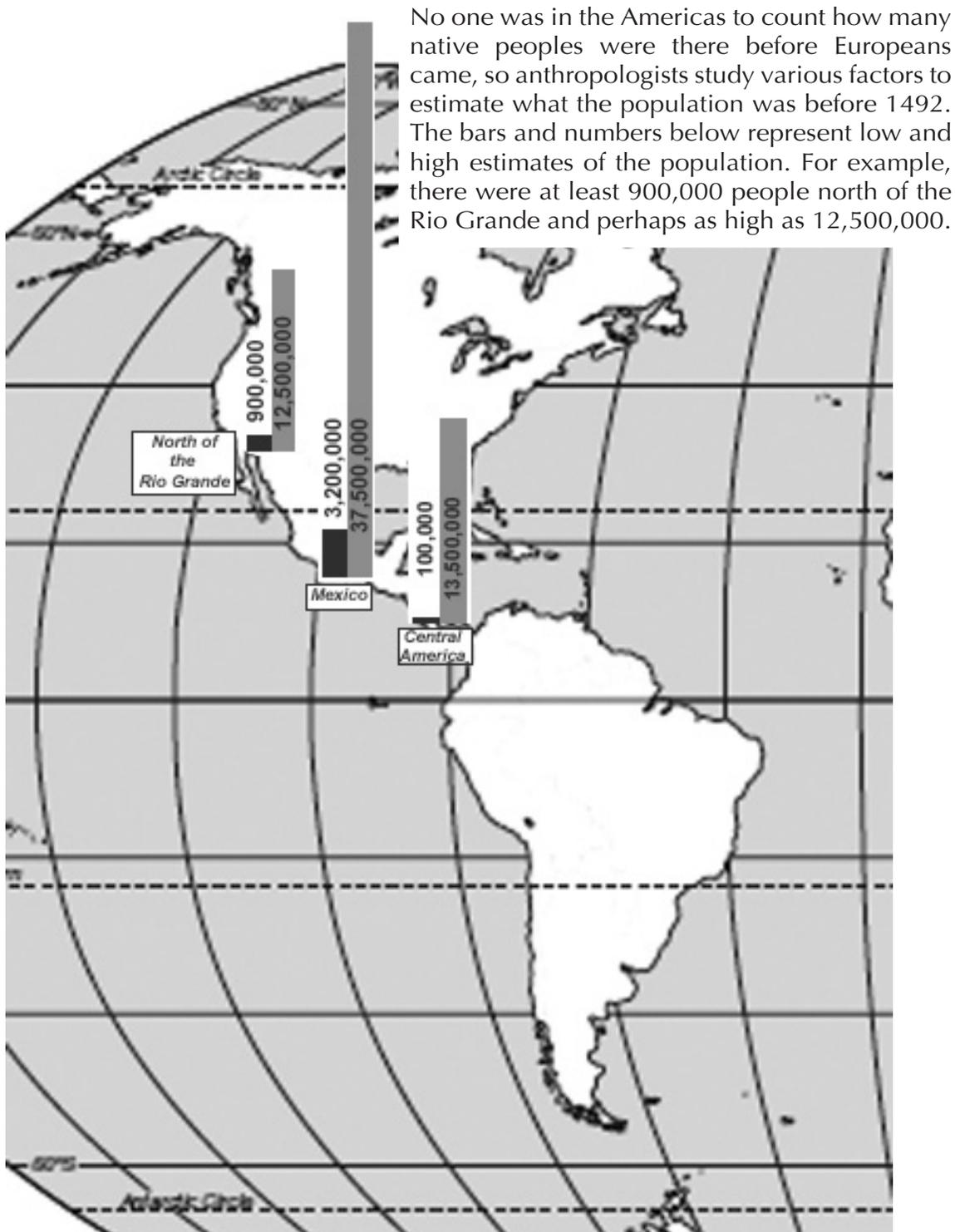
Christopher Columbus	Christopher Columbus	Christopher Columbus
Christopher Columbus	Christopher Columbus	Christopher Columbus
Christopher Columbus	Christopher Columbus	Christopher Columbus
Christopher Columbus	Christopher Columbus	Christopher Columbus
Juan Díaz de Solís	Juan Díaz de Solís	Juan Díaz de Solís
Pedro Álvares Cabral	Amerigo Vespucci	Vasco Nuñez de Balboa
Pedro Álvares Cabral	Amerigo Vespucci	Vasco Nuñez de Balboa
Rodrigo de Bastidas & Juan de la Cosa	Francisco Montejó	Juan de Grijalva
Rodrigo de Bastidas & Juan de la Cosa	Francisco Montejó	Juan de Grijalva
Francisco Hernandez de Cordoba	Hernando (Hernán) Cortés	Alvar Cabeza de Vaca
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The Peoples of the Americas before Columbus



Based on a graphic by Steven Rountree in Lewis Lord, "How Many People Were Here Before Columbus?" *U.S. News & World Report* (August 10, 1997)

Cantino Planisphere



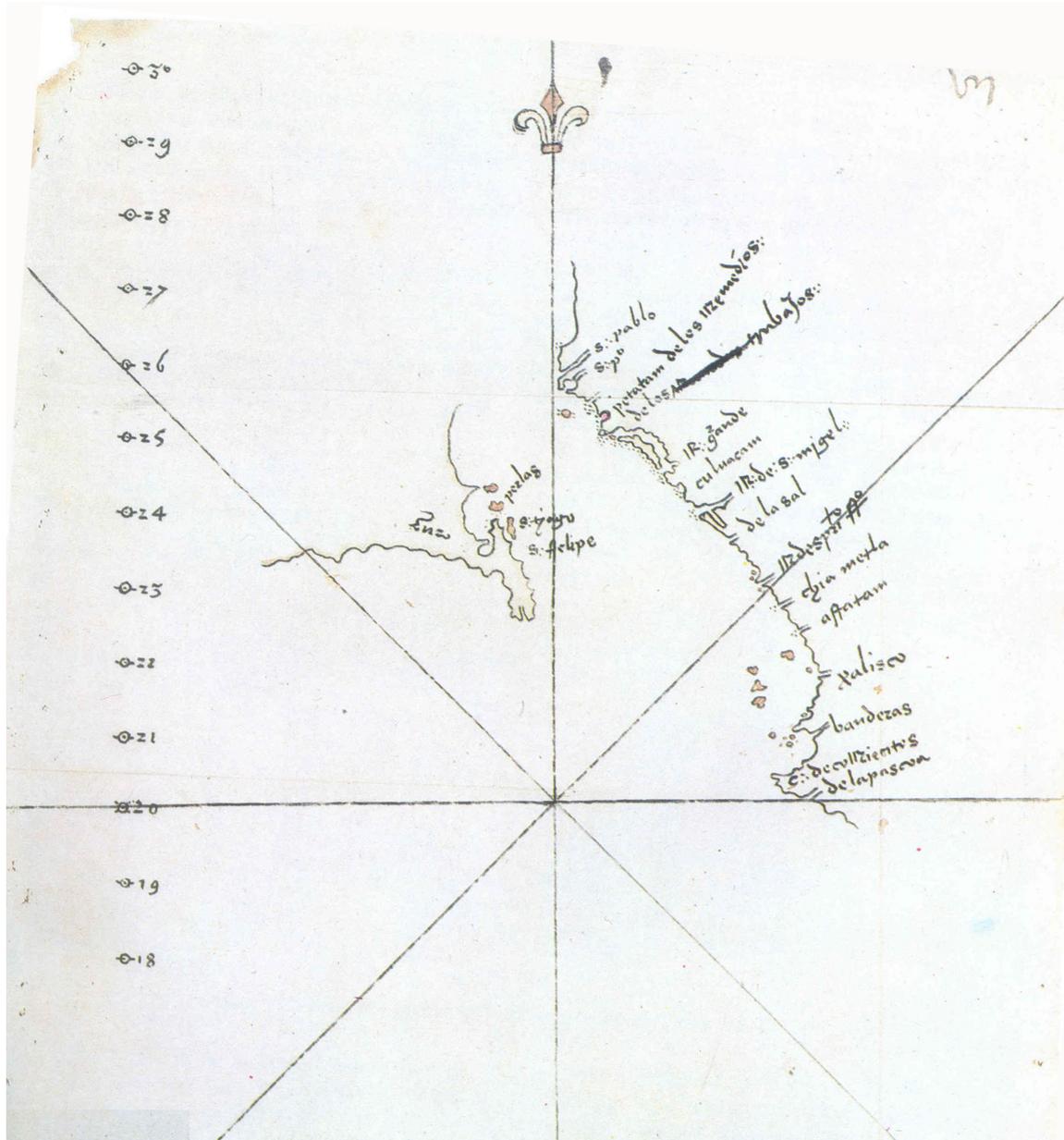
This digital version of the Planisphere map was created by Jonathan Crowe, author of *The Map Room*, a blog about maps.

Available: <http://pics.livejournal.com/jucundushomo/pic/0000638c/>

Map Worksheet

1. What features does the map have? (You might need a magnifying glass!)
 - Compass Scale Handwritten notes Title
 - Name of mapmaker Legend/key Country borders
 - Physical features (such as mountains, rivers, lakes, or features such as currents, wind patterns) List:
 - Decorations/illustrations Measurements/directions
 - Place names—can you read them? What is the date of the map? Is the date listed on the map itself?
2. Why do you think this map was drawn? What evidence in the map gives you that idea?
3. Who might use this map?
4. Compare the map to a present-day map of the Americas (western hemisphere). List the things that are
 - A. The same:
 - B. Different:
5. Most of the maps are not done in English. Find at least two names or words on the map that you can identify and at least two words or places that you do not know.
6. What questions do you have about the map? This could be something you would want to ask the mapmaker or a question about any feature of the map.

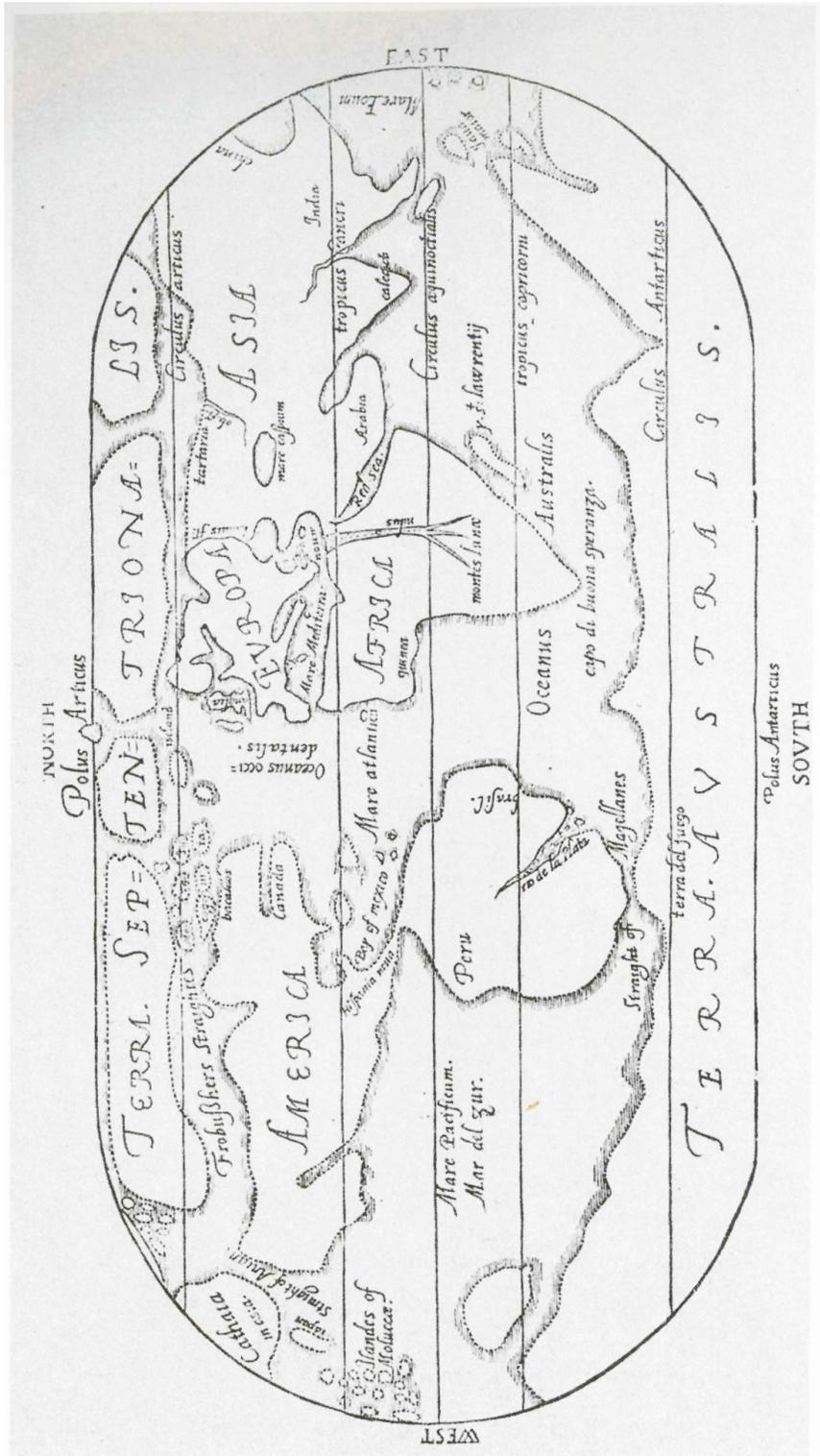
**Map prepared in connection with the Hernán Cortés exploration
of present-day Baja California (1535)**



Hernán Cortés led many conquests and explorations in the New World, including Cuba and, most well-known, the conquest of the Aztecs of Tenochitlán. Once the Spanish government set up control of Mexico and most of the Aztec riches, Cortés hoped to find other riches or at least a passageway to the Indies. The earliest manuscript map of any part of California was attached to an enactment of taking possession of present-day Baja California by Cortés on May 3, 1535. He started a colony he named Santa Cruz (near present-day La Paz). In the peninsula can be seen the last part of the word "Cruz." The southernmost tip of Baja California still has a village named Santiago.

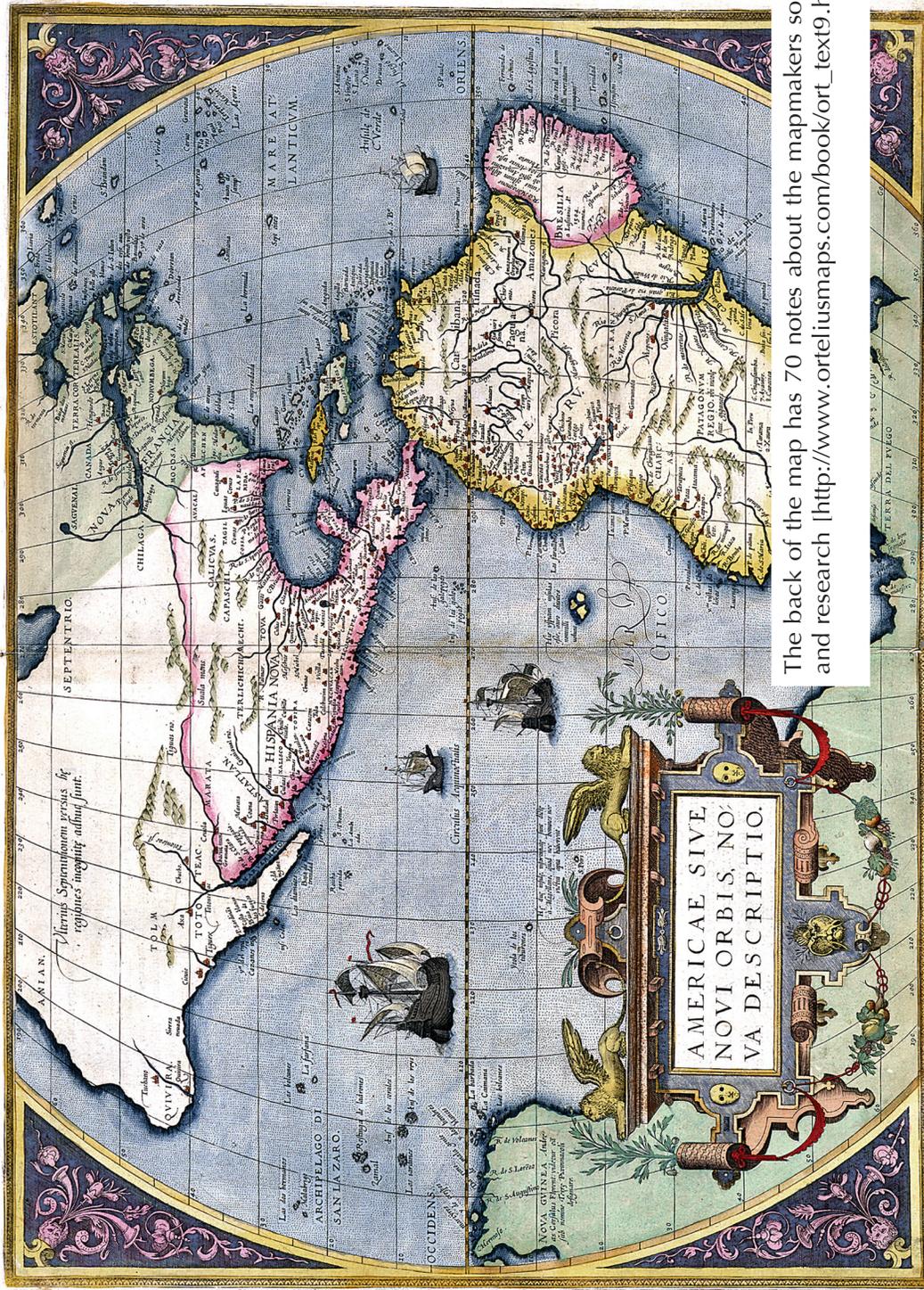
Humphrey Gilbert

Map in *Discourse of a Discoverie for a New Passage to Cataia* [China] (1576)



Sir Humphrey Gilbert was an English scholar and soldier who became famous as a navigator and explorer. He believed there was a northwest passage by water across the North American continent that would lead to the East Indies. He wrote an essay about his theory in 1576. Cataia was a name for modern-day China.

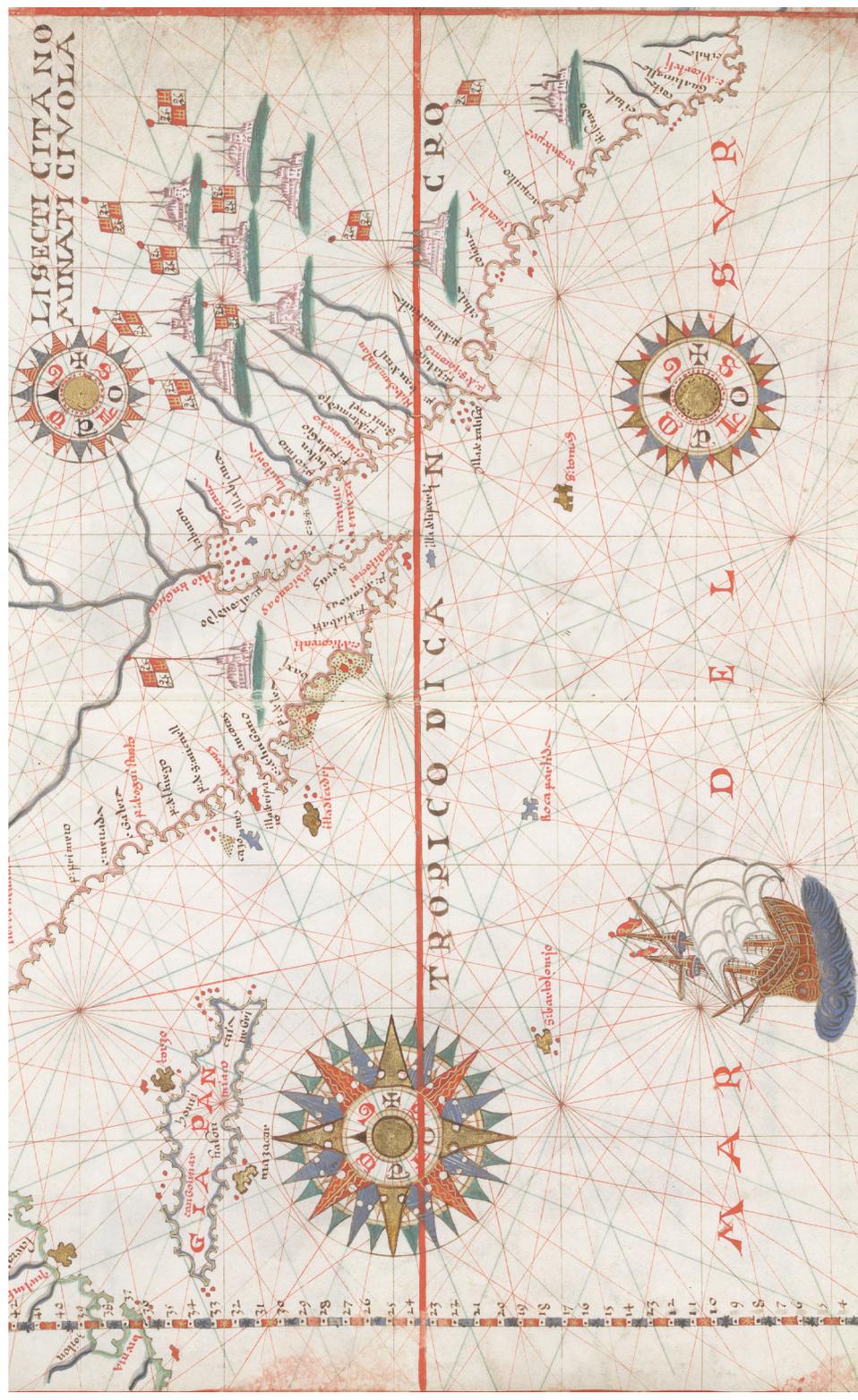
Abraham Ortelius, *America Sive Novi Orbis* (1570)



The back of the map has 70 notes about the mapmakers sources and research [http://www.orteliusmaps.com/book/ort_text9.html]

Abraham Ortelius was a Dutch geographer and cartographer. He published a world atlas, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, which was probably the first collection of maps in the shape of a book. Unlike most mapmakers of his time, he noted his sources of information, including other mapmakers.

“North Pacific Ocean, including coasts of Mexico, California, Asia, and Japan”
Joan Martines, *Portolan Atlas* (ca. 1578)



Joan Martines was a mapmaker, possibly from Mallorca, Spain which had a cartographic school. He produced more than thirty charts and atlases between 1550 and 1591.

**“California as an Island in a Printed Map of America”
John Overton, London, 1668**



The son of a tailor, John Overton (1640-1713) became a printer after an 8-year apprenticeship. He purchased the shop and collection of mapmaker Peter Stent and later the copper-plates of another mapmaker, John Speed. Overton created map sets based on the works of others. He published between the mid-1660s until 1707 when he sold his stock to his son, Henry.

